

17
Early Religion:

O R,
The Way for a Young Man
to remember his Creator.

Proposed in a

SERMON

Preach'd upon the Death of

Mr. Robert Linager,

A Young Gentleman,

Who left this World, Octob. 26. 1682.

With an account of some Passages of his *Life and Death*.

By T.^o **ROGERS**, M. A.

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Early Religion:

or

The Way for a Young Man

to get on in the World

Proposed by

SERMON

Preach'd upon Sabbath

At the Church of St. Andrew

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]

On the 14th of [Month]

At the Church of St. Andrew

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]

On the 14th of [Month]

At the Church of St. Andrew

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]



To those Young Men that were the Fellow Students, and the particular and intimate Acquaintance of the deceased
Mr. Robert Linager.

Much Respected Sirs,

AS at your Request the following Sermon was preach'd; so to gratify your further Desire, in the poor and mean Dress that you now see it, it ventures into the World. Which Desire of yours, I attribute rather to have proceeded from the willingness that you had to keep up the remembrance of your Friend, and what was memorable in his Example, than from any thing else that could appear to your Judgments as worthy of the publick view. And I hope to that it may be serviceable, tho' not so much, nor so well, as if it had been managed by others of greater skill in Affairs of this nature than I pretend to have. I intend not, as you see, to usher it in with the Titles of the *Worshipful, the Honourable, or the Reverend*, nor to court the Protection of the Great; all the ambition of my Discourse is, to bear the Titles of such to whom it was peculiarly address'd, among whom you are the chief.

I have no other aim in the whole Sermon, nor in the printing of it, than to shew the necessity of a serious remembrance of God in Youth. And 'tis all my desire, that He who is wont to bless sincere, though weak, Endeavours, would

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make it successful to such an End. And tho' I expect to meet with ill treatment from the Censorious and the Critical; yet if I may, by complying with your Desires, be in the least helpful to the furtherance of your Holy Faith, or the Good of others, I shall not be much concern'd with all the Aspersions and the Calumnies that may be thrown upon me. These my First-Fruits I humbly offer to my Creator, by the High Priest of the most Noble Order, his own Son, by whom I hope this poor Oblation may meet with a favourable acceptance, and, as it is design'd, be made (through his Blessing) somewhat useful to the Service of the Sanctuary, and to you whom I believe to be the Temples of the Holy Ghost.

Pardon me, if I presume to be your Monitor in this, that as you are engaged in a contemplative studious Course of Life, so you would so well provide for your own Ease and Pleasure, and for your good progress in Learning, as amidst all your Studies, to contemplate God. The frequent Thoughts of Him will be a great relief to your Minds, when they are apt to be weary, and faint, with the multitude of other Thoughts. When you are perplex'd, he can shew you the right way to Satisfaction; he can solve your Doubts, and render those things obvious and plain, which to Men that *lean upon their own Understandings*, will continue to be mysterious and unfathomable. 'Tis the great *Father of Lights* that can alone chase away that darkness which is the natural grievance and trouble of the Soul. When you *dig for Knowledge as for hidden Treasure*, he can tell you where the rich Vein lies, that others miss of after a long and tedious search; for without his assistance and direction 'tis never to be found. Those glorious Truths that enlarge and beautify the Soul, are not the Portion of the Careless and Irreligious, but of the Meek, the Humble, and Devout, for such, he that hath his Chair in Heaven, will *guide in Judgment, and teach his Way*. Forget not

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to converse with your God, while you converse with others; nor while you read other Books, slight those that he made. You have the Scriptures, and the Volume of the Creation both to read and study, and these will not be, as *Solomon* speaks of the rest, *a weariness to the Flesh*; for every time you look upon them, you will have new degrees of pleasure; only you must so order your Meditations, that one may help the other, and that your *Philosophy* may minister to *Divinity*, and your Reason to Faith.

As you enjoy the great Priviledg of a learned ingenious Education, so God expects more from you than from others! You have more leisure to think of him, than those that are employed in Trades, and servile Offices. And besides, you know very well, that the best way to improve your short abode on Earth, is to be undressing, to leave off by degrees an over-great indulgence to the Body, that so you may, with great willingness and patience, lay it quite aside when your Maker calls you to go strip'd of this Garment, into the Spiritual and Eternal State. You should always be in a prepared posture, that when the Night (or rather the day) of your deliverance comes, you may travel with courage from this House of Bondage, into the joyful and happy Land.

The frequent remembrance of your Creator, will take away from Death its frightful and ghastly shape. Nor will it seem a dismal thing for you to remove to him whom you have often thought upon. To die then, will be only as if you should cross the Narrow Seas with a fair gale, and go and see a Friend with whom you have held a good correspondence; who hath sent you many rich Presents, and with whom you have long wish'd to be. While you are young, please him by a constant opposing of your Sins, and then you will fight your last Battel with admirable skill, and be crowned with a sure Conquest: for this will be the lot of all those that were engag'd betimes in this Holy War.

There

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There be many erroneous by-paths, and you must deliberate and act wisely when you are first setting out, lest you wander in a wrong way, and be forc'd, after you have endur'd much hard labour, to return back again. I question not but you will, by your blameless and holy carriage, let others see that there is a great beauty and lustre in Religion, and by your practice present it to their Observation, as a very sweet amiable thing. In this sense you may be Preachers, without being obnoxious to Penalties, to Fines or Imprisonment, even the *Preachers of Righteousness* in a corrupt and wicked Age. This honourable Temper will be useful to your selves and others too; it will yield you store of quiet comfortable Thoughts, that others must never have, that make it late ere they begin their Master's Work. This will make you unwearied in all Holy Duties, and constant to your own Vows and Promises, in the days of Evil, such as ours are. And if (as our Sins have given sober and considerate Men too much cause to fear) the thick darkness of *Popery* should over-spread our Land again, it will be some comfort (if there can be any left in so sad a Case) for you to think that you did not (as others by their brutish Lusts) even desire our Saviour to depart out of our Coasts; that you did not hasten the loss of the Gospel, nor the setting of the Sun.

And if at any time you find your selves indispos'd to the performance of this important necessary Work, call to mind the example of this *young Gentleman*; your late Companion and Fellow-Student. Think with what earnestness and fervour he prayed, and do you the same. But I am afraid I shall but encrease the sorrow that you have for so great a Loss, and make your Wounds bleed afresh, while I mention the Name of your dear Friend. It is I know a trouble to you, when you consider that he is dead; who, had he liv'd, might have been a great comfort to the now disconsolate Lady his Mother, and to you an Instance of a more than ordinary Zeal and Piety, and by his Example,

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Example a great help to you in your way to Heaven. He might have been a great Blessing to this Nation, that needs the Prayers of many such as he was. But God saw it fit to put a period to his Life. In his early days he arrived to those bounds that were appointed for his abode here: And tho' his Maker and yours thought fit soon to remove him, yet you may conclude that it was even then the most proper and seasonable time for him to die. And I am sure you will not be studifloyal, nor so traiterously enclin'd, as to call the King of the World to your Bar, nor to question the Supream Ruler (that was never guilty of any miscarriage in Government) for what he hath done with his own. It may be he is removed from those Evils that you must live to see; and will you, that loved him so well, envy him the peculiar favour and regard of God? or be vex'd that your Friend is safe, while you are in the danger; or that he is in the Harbour, while you are yet to sail upon the rough stormy Waves? It has been observ'd, that Jesus when he knew that *Lazarus* was dead, was not much concern'd, but when he was to be rais'd, and to come into this miserable World again, then he wept. And indeed considering the Sorrows and Troubles, the Disappointments and Vexations of this short uneasy Life, how uncertain and how frail are its Joys, and how sure its Grievs, we may well think it was not without the highest Reason that the Wise Man said, *Eccles. 7. 1. The day of Death is better than the day of ones Birth*; to the Religious I am sure it is greatly so. The one is as the entering into a noisom Prison, the other as the going out into a stately Palace, and a clear Air. The one is the way to Labour, and the other is the way to Rest. The one a passage to a dark troubled Condition, the other to a perpetual Calmness and Serenity.

If our Holy Friends that were better prepared have gone faster than we, and have bid us farewell, let us remember they are but gone as our Saviour did (upon higher accounts) to their

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their Father and Ours, and it is not a farewell for ever. They are in the *House not made with Hands*, and we are in this *Ta-bernacle*; yet we shall meet again, tho' not to eat and drink together as we did here, yet to live as Angels do, upon the sweet Emanations of the Deity, and the Joys that follow there-upon, which is a far more glorious honourable Life. If many of our good Friends are in Heaven already, this World should seem to us all, less desirable than it was; and we that are young, should upon this Consideration run with the greater cheerfulness, and long to be there, where none are complaining they died too soon. Let us now be Religious, and then the time will come, when you and I, and all the good People, both young and old, that we have known on Earth, shall meet together in the presence of our Lord, who with the shouts of his attending Angels, and Saints, will congratulate our Happiness, and bid us welcome to the secure possession of that glorious Crown for which we now strive and pray: Then shall we discourse of our Creator, and of all things that are great and comfortable, in a far better manner, and with much more pleasure than we can below. And that we may, when this Life shall end, obtain so great a Blessing, shall be the continued and sincere desire of,

London, Nov. 15.

Respected S I R S,

Your real Friend, and

humble Servant,

Timothy Rogers.

To the Young
R E A D E R.

BEing desired by the Author of the following discourse, to write something before it by way of Preface, I have thus far complied with him, rather to bear Testimony to what he spake, concerning the Young Gentleman, whose early Death gave Occasion to it, then that I thought my name of any significancy to recommend it to the Publick. My present Circumstances are such (as is not unknown to the Author) that I have not had time for so much as a thorough perusal of the Sermon, and therefore am not to be accountable for every thing a critical, much less a Capricious Observer may Cavil at: Midwives are not responsible for every Mold or Mark on the Children they help into the World. Let it suffice that as I have found, in what I have Read of it, many things serious, savory, profitable, so I have heard the whole much commended by those that heard it Preached in a Congregation, mostly of Young ones, for whose benefit it was designed, and to whom it was chiefly accommo-

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dated: it did affect when heard why may it not when Read? The account given of the Party deceased in the latter end is most of it true, upon my personal Knowledge, who was frequently with him in his Sickness, unto whom much then mentioned was spoken; the rest I believe to be true upon the Authority of credible Persons who were with him when I was absent. He had the ill Fate which attends many Young Men (to the Blasting those Hopes their Relations, or Country might have of them) to fall into some bad Company, and then (as wonder if) into some bad Courses. Though he never arrived at any height of Debauchedness; But beside the more timely Checks, God gave him in the way of his providence by some Cross Occurrents, and the stop he was thereby put to (which in his Health, I have heard him acknowledge to have been his mercy) he was further in his Sickness awakened to a serious consideration of his ways, which he did with great regret reflect upon, and judge himself for, not only making promises (no less deceitful in most under his Circumstances, than frequent) of what he would do, and be, should the Lord restore him; but Earnestly Praying for Christ, and Grace, both for pardon, and purging, with several serious, and spiritual Expressions, more than was expected from one who had lately been under so unhappy an Education. I cannot but have charitable thoughts of him, believing that if ever Death-bed Repentance be sincere

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sincere, it is in those that being Young are not so hardened in Sin, nor have resisted so many motions of Gods Spirit, nor rejected so many offers of Grace as Older Sinners have done. However let not Young ones presume upon the account of this, or any like Instance, but, Remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth, and health, considering their Lives are in Gods Hand, who is a sovereign, and may as well not give them Hearts to repent when Old, as not give them Time to grow Old. How many are Nipt in the Bud, or Cut off in the Flower of their age, when their Hearts are filled with Wordly lusts, and their Minds lifted up with worldly Hopes. And they Dream of nothing less than the End of their Days, and an Eternal State. Were there the Reason, and Judgment of Elder Men in the Heads of the Younger, it might be an easiertask to deal with them; but Youth is a slippery Age, full of Passion, Rashness, wilfulness, and so, apt to despise the Counsel of those that are more Grave, and experienced, and to think it proceeds not so much from the Love they have to Young Souls, as the Envy they bear to their Youthful pleasures. But what folly is this, and how much to be lamented in them, if we cannot reclaim them from it? Can you, Sirs, Clip the Wings of Time that it may not fly from you, or put off the approach of Eternity that it may not hasten upon you? Can your Lusts, and pleasures prevent your Death, or prepare

To the Young Reader.

pare you for it? think seriously of it, and you will be of my Mind. Why then are ye not up and doing as soon as you can? Why do you not Work out your Salvation, as Hard as you can; all your Time and strength are little enough for such a Work. Let every Example of Mortality in others, and this in particular, mind you of your own: Live like those that know you must die, and so as you will certainly wish you had lived, when you come to die. You are growing up to be the Successors of us that are Elder, and to fill up our places in the World when we are gone out of it. May you out-do us in all that is good, and praise-worthy; may your Zeal for God, and Holiness shame the degeneracy, and Coldness of present professors. Religion loses ground in this age, if you keep it not up in your selves it will be quite lost in the next. And therefore I must again inculcate, what is the scope of this discourse, begin betimes; and give God your strength and the Morning of your Day; never think it too soon to turn to him, nor too long to serve him; you will not count an whole Eternity too much for your own Happiness, do not count your whole Life too much for his service. The Lord himself give you Counsell, who is able by the Power of his Grace to make you willing to take it; which is the unfeigned desire of him who is

Your Souls Friend; and Servant
for Jesus Sake.

E. Veal.

Funeral Sermon.

ECCLES. 12. 1.

*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth,
while the evil days come not, nor the Years draw
nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in
them.*

WHEN we seriously consider the miserable and uncertain State of Men since the Fall of *Adam*, how many wide Breaches the Transgression of our first Parents has made, both for spiritual and eternal Dangers to enter in upon us, and yet how secure and careless Men are of their Danger; it ought to affect our Hearts with a great Tenderness, and Pity: but it ought much more to affect us, if we consider, that of all others Young Men are generally the most careless, though they are besieged with more Enemies, and liable to more Dangers; yet for the most part they are employed in mean Affairs, that have no Relation to their Happiness, and are forgetful of their God,

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and

and the deplorable Condition of their own Souls. Secure they are, though they have in their Bodies the Seeds of innumerable Distempers ; one whereof, when it shall be conceived and brought forth, will destroy its own Parent : They remember not, that the Clock that is now wound up, and performs its regular, and daily Motions, and goes well, must have all its Wheels broken, or, when the Maker pleases, run down again. Happy were the Persons that might put a stop to them in their mad Career, or awaken them to serious Apprehensions of their real Interest, before the hour of Darkness, and the day of Death. It hath pleased God, in whose disposal are the Lives of Men, *by the taking away of one young Man lately from the World*, in his fresh and tender Age, to give me this occasion, (at the desire of his Acquaintance) to speak to others of the things that immediately concern their eternal State ; and how they should, by his Example, be taught in their *early days*, to repent of Sin, and to prepare for a better World. I hope the same God will make this a merciful Season to us, that are yet among the Living ; that we may by the memorial of the *Deceased*, be in a continual preparation for that time, when we shall hear his Call, and leave the World. And that we may be so, let us attend to the grave Counsel of this Preacher, the wisest of Men ; that after a long Experience of all that had but a shew of Pleasure, or was accounted worthy to be loved by the Sons of Men, reap'd nothing but Vexation, and Bitterness, and a sharp Remembrance ; and therefore concluded, that it was most useful, and expedient, to guard the Mind against those Follies, and betimes to remember God.

In the former Chapter, having explained what were
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the Comforts, and Happiness of Life ; that *the Light was sweet, and that it was a pleasant thing for the Eyes to behold the Sun* ; i. e. to enjoy a prosperous, unafflicted State, and all that our Hearts can well desire : Yet he tells us, that, *though we live many Years, and rejoice in them all ; yet we ought to remember the Days of Darknes,* *for they will be many.* After we have satisfied our Appetites with all that is delicious and grateful, we must retire into the next World, and dwell for a long time in the gloomy Chambers of the Grave. Then he upbraids the Follies and Neglects of Young Men, that are immers'd in sensual Delights, not thinking of the Day of Judgment, and that great Account that must be made hereafter at the Bar of God. And the Preacher concludes his Sermon of the Unsatisfactoriness and Vanity of all sensual, transitory Things, with this serious Application, *Remember thy Creator now in the days of thy Youth, &c.*

In which Words, we may observe,

1. The Duty it self, *To remember God.*
2. The time when it is to be practis'd, *Now, in the days of Youth.*
3. The reason of this necessary Work ; *The evil days will come, and the Tears wherein we shall have no Pleasure.*

And these together afford us this plain Proposition.

We ought in our *early days*, before the Approaches of old Age, to remember God.

In the explaining of which, I shall endeavour to shew you ;

B 2

I. What

I. What is meant by the Remembrance of our Creator.

II. Why we are engaged to this.

III. What should move us to do it in our early Days.

IV. What Rules we must observe, that we may attain this early Remembrance.

V. What will be the good Consequences that will accompany the Practice of so great a Duty.

- I. First, What it is to remember our Creator. It is in all our religious and civil Actions before others, and in secret, to have an awful, reverential Sense of God upon our Souls; to acknowledg his rightful Dominion over us, and all our Actions; to contemplate with delight and wonder, the various efforts of his Goodness, and his innumerable Favours; to be mindful of his August Presence, and to attempt nothing that is mean, or fordid; as knowing we are under the sight of his jealous Eye, *His* that sees us in all our Retirements, and Solitude, *that ponders our Steps*, and has all our private Thoughts, our Words and Actions on Record; to love Him with a supream cordial Affection; to hope in his Promise; to chuse him alone as our most lasting, valuable, chief Good: To imitate (as far as we can) the Loyal Angels, that surround his Throne in Postures full of Reverence and Submission, that wait to know his Command, and when 'tis once revealed, delay not, but with a swift Motion, execute his Pleasure: To observe his Laws; to celebrate his Praise; to acquiesce in all his Dealings, and Procedures with us; to think of Him with the most elevated

Appre-

Apprehensions; to mount as high as we can in our Contemplation of his glorious, adorable Excellencies; and then to descend and lie low in the humble Sense of our short, scanty, Thoughts; to make Him the constant, delightful Object of our Meditation. This is to remember God, and is the same with being truly Religious, the mark of all sincere, holy Persons; whereas, to forget him, is to be wicked, and to bear the stamp of Hell. Psal. 9. 17.

II. The second thing in order, is to shew what Engagements we are under to remember our Creator.

First, All the Faculties and Powers of our Souls are given us to this end and purpose. The great Creator of the World, *has made all things for himself*, and us Prov. 16. 4. much more, who as far exceed all inferiour Creatures, as Angels do Men, and the Sun the lesser Lights. He has beautified our Natures, with so many Resemblances of his own glorious Perfections, that we cannot look upon our Frame, but we must view the fair Draughts of a kind and skillful Hand; and when we see that they exceed all the best Essays of Art, conclude, they were drawn there by *the Finger of the Lord*, who is upon this account worthy to be remembered. Our Creator has endowed us with a sprightly Vigor, and a Power of moving beyond all sensible exterior Things, that we may pass these by as too inglorious and mean for our Consideration, and that when we see the World even in its best Cloaths and Furniture, in all its Pomp and Splendor unable fully to content our Thoughts, we may with a generous Disdain, act like the Spectators of a better Place; and soar as on *Eagles Wings* from these low Regions of Unquietness and

and Fear, to the Seat of that *one solid and eternal Good*, who can alone satisfy the boundless Desires of the Soul, and ought to be the first Object of our Choice. Have we a Spirit that is in its sublime Nature, not only allied to Angels, but to God himself? and shall we forget our honourable Kindred, or fix our Minds on these Vanities below, when we have a Being that *is all beautiful and lovely to think upon*? Our thinking Powers, and our Affections stream'd from his ever-flowing Goodness; and therefore should, like the Rivers that owe their Being to the Sea, make haste to pass through the Earth, and return again thither. Wherefore have we this Living immaterial Substance, this glorious Inhabitant in our earthly Tabernacles sent from yonder World, but that it may be mindful of its illustrious Descent, of the Author of its Being, and strive to shake off its Chains, and to return to that happy Land again? Wherefore are we assigned our abode here, but to be the humble Spectators of our Maker's Wisdom, and to yield him Praise? and that while we see the World enriched with so many wonders of the divine Power and Goodness, we may contemplate, and adore the Creator of it? Our heaven-born Spirits are design'd for a nobler Work than to gaze upon the small glimmering Appearances of Good and Pleasure here below; and when we see all Sublunary things changing with a continual Vicissitude, ebbing and flowing, and scarcely for one day the same; we ought to fix our whole Aim on him that is *unchangeable*, on him that is the *Father of our Spirits*, that when
 Heb. 12. 9. the diseased, crazy World shall give up the Ghost, will inspire them with Life and Health, that will cloath them
 1 Cor. 7. 31. in new Robes when the *Fashion of these present things*
 shall

shall pass away; and when this cheating fallacious Earth, and the visible Heavens themselves shall wax old, and like a *Vesture be changed.* Shall we not remember our Creator, when we have innumerable Instances of his Munificence and Bounty? we are warm'd with his Beams, see with his Light, and shall we either shut our Eyes against him, or turn them to meaner Objects, when we have him always to look upon?

Pfal. 102
26.

Besides this, the very Frame of our earthly Dwelling, which is so well fitted for all the noble Uses and Operations of the Soul, should engage us to remember that wise Builder, that has in fair and legible Characters, set his own great Name upon it; so that he that runs may read there the wonderful Wisdom, and the Power of God. This was the Employment of the Royal Prophet (of all others most devout) when he considered, *that he was fearfully made,* he breaths out the Desires of an Heart enflamed with sincere Love; *O God, when I awake, I am still with thee.* As soon as ever Sleep left his Eyes, they were lifted up to Heaven, and his Breast was filled with new Meditations of the great Wisdom, and the Power of God. 'The Soul of Man (as * one observes) is 'as it were a compendious Statue of the Deity; her 'Substance is a solid Effigies of God; And therefore as 'with Ease, we may consider the Substance and Mo- 'tions of the vast Heavens on a little Sphere: So we 'may with like Facility contemplate the Almighty in 'this little Medal of God, the Soul of Man.

Pfal. 139
14.
Vers. 18.

* Dr.
More in
his An-
tidote a-
gainst A-
theism.
ch. xi.
p. 61.

Secondly, The Care that our Creator takes of us in this World, should engage us to remember him. When he thought fit to tye the Marriage-knot between Mortal

2.

Mortal and Immortal, the Body and the Soul, like an
 indulgent kind Father, he before-hand provided all
 Accommodations that might be for the mutual Com-
 fort of the loving Couple: and is it not fit we should
 remember so great a Benefactor, so kind a Friend? He
 is our Landlord, we his Tenants, that hold all that
 we have on his Grant: and shall we not acknowledg
 his Dominion and Sovereignty, and pay him with
 delight this small and easy Tribute? His Love to us
surpasses the Love of Men or Women. He lets us still
 abide in these Houses of Clay, though we run behind,
 and fail in the payment of that Homage he requires;
 He bears our Affronts with Patience, he tries us yet
 longer, whilst we (ingrateful Cratures!) can find in
 our Hearts to put off our best Friend only with good
 Words, with fair Promises and vain Delays. He
 prolongs our Days, and gives us more time, when his
 Justice might ere this have seiz'd upon us for our Ar-
 rears, when we deserved to be cast into an eternal
 Prison, and to be turn'd out of this World, and Hea-
 ven both at once. We are fed with his Bread, clothed
 with his Wool; all our Enjoyments, our Friends, our
 Health, our Peace, are his Gift; and ought we not
 to remember the Donor of so many Mercies? If the
 Rain and the Dew moisten and refresh the Ground, 'tis
 for our good; if the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of
 the Field are maintain'd by the constant Supplies of his
 Providence, 'tis for us: So that all the Creatures, the
 Fowls of Heaven, the Fishes of the Sea, the Sun, Moon,
 and Stars, that are the Lamps hung upon the Roof of
 our Dwelling, to make our Lives the more sweet and
 comfortable; nay, the Day and the Night, and the
 Psal. 19. several Seasons of the Year *utter their Voice*, and early
 2. and

and late call upon us *to remember God.* The Language of all our Mercies is this, that our Creator, and their Parent is worthy to be lov'd, and thought upon. And if some of the Eastern Nations paid their early Devotions to the Sun, * because of its Greatness and Splendor, and Usefulness, in cherishing and ripening the Fruits of the Earth with its kindly Beams, because of its refreshing Heat, and Comfortable Light. How should we consecrate the Morning of our Age to God, who made that so bright, so useful, and so glorious a Creature as it is; and is much more by his favourable Influences to every one of us, than the Sun is to the World? He that has been long sick will remember the Physician, by whose Skill, and good Advice he obtain'd a Cure. He that has by the help of his Friend: been freed from a long and tedious Captivity, will all his days, with a thankful Heart, remember that Friend. The Pilgrim will remember him that gives him Entertainment in his Travel; the Poor his Benefactor; And shall not we then remember our Creator? who when we were fallen among Thieves and Robbers among the savage Inhabitants of the miserable Place, who had left us, as they thought, for dead, having stript us of our Innocence, sent his own Son to heal our Wounds, and to cloath us with the Garments of Salvation? When we were by our own Folly like to languish all our Days in Bondage, and a dark, mournful State, he sent the *Angel of the Covenant* to strike off our Chains, and to yield us so much of heavenly Light, that we might both see who it was that set open the Prison Door, and where the way lay that would conduct us to a better place. When we had sold our selves, he bought us again at a great and dear

* Vossius, de origine & progressu Idolatriæ. lib. 2. cap. 2.

- 1 Pct. 1. Price, *The Blood of his own Son* : When we were poor,
 19. he open'd the Treasures of Heaven to make us rich,
 and to supply our Wants. How frequently then ought
 we to remember such a God, that when we had
 turn'd our selves out of Happiness, was willing to
 sheath his flaming Sword, and to let us enter into the
 Joys of a better Paradise, than that which was the Seat
 of our first Parents ? That sent us the News of Pardon,
 when we were condemn'd by the Sentence of the Law,
 even when Satan was leading us away to Execution,
 and when we deserv'd to dy ?

III. The third General to be spoken of, is, to shew
 what necessity there is that we should remember our
 Creator now in the days of our Youth. And this will be
 evident, when he have considered those two things.

1. First, *We know not but before the days of old Age,
 Death may cut us off.* There be many Young Men that
 are now past all help, and have set in Darkness, that
 might have been shining among the Stars above, had
 they not been over-perswaded by the Devil, to neg-
 lect their God, through the hopes of a long and ealie
 Life ; that would never believe they were in dan-
 ger, till it came like an *Armed Man* ; never believe they
 should leave the World, till they were seiz'd with the
 last Agonies and Pains of Death. We are now in
 Health, but do we know how soon a mortal incur-
 able Distemper may seize upon us ? We are now tra-
 velling on the Road, but do we know when we shall
 arrive at our *long home*, and conclude our Journey ?
 Now we are in the number of the Living, but ere
 long we may increase the number of the Dead, and
 add some Unites more to the Weekly Bills. We should
 remember

remember our Creator now, for the next Moment is not our own; our Life is a *Dream*, or *Vision of the Night*, Job 20.8 that is possess'd with strange Delusions; that when we awake to a serious Thoughtfulness of what is our real Interest, pass away, and are not remembered with Delight any more. *Our Days on Earth, are as a Shadow* 1 Chron. 29. 15. that will vanish, when the Sun is either gone down, or when 'tis wrapt in the Mantle of a thick Cloud. Though we are now at ease in these Cottages of Clay, yet we are here only by Permission, and during the Pleasure of our Lord: but when our Lease will expire, or the day of our Departure come, we know not. It is by the unalterable Decrees of God *appointed for us all* Heb. 9. *once to dy*: but we that are forbidden to pry into the 27. Arcana's of his secret Counsels, know not when that Statute, that was made because of our Sin, shall be put in Execution, and take both our Lives and Goods away. Now we have pitch'd our Tents, but are not certain when the Orders will be issued out for us to remove into another place. Now the Body and the Soul, like two loving Friends, dwell in Peace together; but they must part, one into the Grave, and the other into a Country that is at a far distance, which we never saw. We are Citizens here only by the Grant of our Creator, and while we flatter our selves, as if the Priviledges and Immunities of this bodily State were long-liv'd, he may take away our Charter. We are Pilgrims wandring to and fro, but with his Pass, and he alone knows how long it shall bear its Date. It is time for us all now to *remember God*; for in the midst of all the Pleasures and Delights of Life, we are near to the Sorrows of the Grave. Our Souls must go when he calls; and how shall we be

able to look him in the Face, if we should be cited to his Bar, while we remain in a careless, delatory Posture? Let none then say, That on the Morrow, or in the next Week, or the next Year, I will remember God; for your *Thoughts may perish*, and you may be dead before. While you linger, the Cloud that is but small at present, may swell into a huge bulk, and dissolve in a mighty Storm; while you are idle, the Glass runs; and ere long the Clock that warns you to arise betimes, and mind your God, and your Souls, will strike its last, and then the door will be shut. We should spend our *Youthful Days* in a serious delightful Contemplation of the Deity, in a vigorous quick March to the Land of Glory; not knowing but in one minute, in one hour more, Death with his large train of Terrors may beat up our Quarters; and, while we suspect no ill, carry us captive to the dark Prison of the Gravel. None of us have received a Protection to secure us from the Arrest and Violence of a *sudden Death*.

Mat. 25.
5, 6. As the *ten Virgins* were called in their slumber, and at *Midnight*; so God has neither promised, nor is obliged to send us a Summons by a long tedious Sickness, or by sharp Pains, before we make our Appearance at his Tribunal, where we shall by an irrevocable Sentence be adjudged to Bliss, or Woe. If we then hope for a place in Glory, we *must now remember God*. The Work, if we expect Eternal Happiness, must once be done, why should it not then commence in our best time? such is the time of Youth. If we delay to another season, are we sure that will come? or that we shall not be called out of the Vineyard, when we thought to have wrought out our Salvation with fear and trembling? 'Tis fit our Eyes should now be fixt on our Creator;
for

for we know not how soon these Windows will be shut in, and a thick Night of Darkness come upon us. When we think our *Mountain* settled on durable Foundations that *will not be removed*, an Earthquake may come and throw it, and us both, out of our place. We may be on the brink of Ruine when we think it is far off. So has many a Ship sail'd with a prosperous and favourable Gale (the Mariners rejoycing) till it immediately split upon a Rock, and was dash'd in pieces. While we go fearless along, our earthen Vessel may by some unexpected Accident fall and crack; then all our hopes of long Life will be as *Water spilt upon the Ground*, and not be fit for service any more.

Secondly; *We ought to remember our Creator now in the days of our Youth; for when the evil days, the days of old Age come, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to perform well so great a Work.* By delaying, we twist much harder the Cords of our Iniquity, which now might be snapt asunder with an easy labour. If we now surrender to the Devil, and once give him Possession, he will scarce be forc'd out again with all our after Pains. Is it now so laborious an Enterprize to conquer Sin? and will it not be much more so, when it shall by our Neglect and Forgetfulness of God, obtain fresh Auxiliaries, and Supplies even from our own Garrisons, and fight against us with greater Violence? If one single Sin put a serious Christian, when he is young, and most fit to manage the spiritual Armour, to so much Pain and Trouble, to so many sad Hour's Tears and Prayers; to how much greater Labor will they be expos'd, that shall have as many Sins to combat with, as the Hours, the Days, and the Weeks they have lived on Earth? If we find it difficult

ficult to wrestle with these Enemies in their Infancy, how do we think to gain the Victory, when they are grown to a full Stature, and a more formidable Power? Have we not long enough already slighted the just and equitable Laws of God? or shall we in despite of all his Warnings, the Motions of his Holy Spirit, and the Checks of our own Consciences still be rebellious, and do the same? They that begin soonest are *but hardly saved*; and do we think to accomplish our Journey well, though we set out for Heaven but in the Evening of the Day? Do we think to be Candidates for Glory at last, if till the Night come we spend our Strength in the way that leads to Ruine? Is it not better to quench the Fire at the first, than to stay till it grow to a mighty Flame, and scorn all the Methods we can use to quench it? Is it not better to seek an Antidote against that Poyson, which we have imbibed, because it was pleasant, and gilded over, than to stay till it seize our vital Parts, and our Case will admit of no Remedy? Is it prudent or safe, not to endeavour to act our part well till we are just going off the Stage? not to think of walking in the ways of God, till we are taking our last Step, and which will set us within the next World? Do we expect to take our Voiage well in Winter, when we have by our Carelessness let the Summer Season pass away? Do we think when our Eyes are blind with Age, that we cannot find our way from home without a Guide, that we shall be able in the midst of Darkness to find our way to Glory? Or that when our Hands will be seized with a trembling Palsy, that we can lay hold on *Eternal Life*? What Benefit shall we have by the Manna that comes down from Heaven, if we

we cannot go out, and gather it, though it be scattered at the door of our Tent? Do we think to call upon God well, when we shall hardly have Strength enough left to tell our Friends that we are ill; or to fetch a Groan, when *the Clouds return after the Rain*, Ecclef. 12. 2. and when one Trouble is hardly gone till a worse come? Can we draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation, when the *Silver Cord will be loosed, and the Pitcher broken at the Fountain*? Do we think we shall be pleasing to God, when we shall be tedious to others, and weary of our selves, and *have no pleasure in the Tears of our Life*? Or, can we believe that when we have been all our days crippled with Sin, he will for our Cure work Miracles; or when we have scorned his Ambassadors in ordinary, that he will give Commission to his Angels to treat with us, or to descend upon the *Waters*? Can we expect a plentiful Harvest at last from that Ground, which we have suffered to ly untill'd; and which like the Field of the Sluggard, *will be all grown over with Thornes*, because we did not through the fear of some little Trouble, in the proper Season, throw Seed upon it? Few arrive in old Age to be famous Artists or good Scholars, that did not begin to learn, and practise the Rules of Art long before; and do we think to be well skilled in the matters of Religion, and to learn our Duty towards God, when all our Strength is gone? When our Ears will be stop't from the Exercise of their proper Office; when our Eyes shall scarce see to read, and our Memories shall be weak and frail? How shall we receive Instruction, and remember God, when it may be we shall forget one day the Actions and Passages of the former? If we *slowly not in his Courts* now, we cannot

Verf. 6.

Prov. 24.
31.

- Pfal. 92. cannot hope *to bring forth Fruit in old Age* ; or when
 14. the Frost or sharp Weather comes. Do we think we shall be a sweet smelling Saviour in the Nostrils of God
 Mal. 1. when we offer him *the torn, the maimed, and the sick,*
 13. our feeble languishing Desires, when we should have devoted to his Service the first-born of our Thoughts? Will he accept the small Remainders and Gleanings of the Vintage, when we have offered our first Fruits, our best and early days to the Flesh, the Devil and the World? Would that Person meet with a pleasing Entertainment, who after he had long fought in the Army of a Rebel, should come at last to lay himself at the Feet of his own Prince, when he is maimed and decrippit, and not any more fit for Service? or rather would he not meet with severe Frowns and Checks, and be sent away with such Language as this, Go Traitor, go, and receive thy Wages of those for whom thou hast brought upon thy self my just Anger, and a large train of Miseries. And will not the glorious God (who is more tender of his Honour than earthly Kings of theirs) cast us off hereafter; if we should think to find Favour in his Sight, after we have serv'd in the Wars of Satan, and done all we could against him, would he not say, Go now to you Sins, to your ancient Masters, the Devil and the World, and see what help they will now give you, whom you chose to serve rather than Me your proper Soveragn? Now indeed our Creator calls, but if we delay much longer, he may go away in wrath, and not return again. Now he waits to see if we will repent; but ere long *his Hand will take*
 Deut. 32 *hold of Vengeance, he will whet his glittering Sword,* arise
 41. to vindicate his Honour, and not extend his Scepter any

any more: Let us think of our Creator now, lest we mourn at last when our Flesh and Bodies are consumed, *Proy. 5.*
 and say how we have hated Instruction, and our Heart *11, 12,*
 despised Reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of our *13.*
 Teachers, nor inclin'd our Ear to them that instructed us?

If we sin away the days of our Youth, in old Age God will disregard our Cries; nor will he at our Desire make our Sun stand still (as it did once in the Vale of Gibeon) till we have conquered all our spiritual Enemies. Let us now then remember our Creator: whilst we may do it with Comfort, and with Hope; and not stay till we be environ'd with Swarms of vexatious Thoughts and hideous Reflections, that will continually sting our forsaken guilty Souls. If like *Esa*, we hunt all the days of our Strength after Pleasure, when we come home at Night, that is, arrive to old Age, we shall be deprived of all our Hopes, and meet with a miserable Disappointment; for those that served their God first, though they were younger than we, will carry away the Blessing which is not to be recovered, for though we seek it as he did carefully with Tears; yet we may like him find no place of Repentance: *Heb. 12.*
 then we shall be baptiz'd in our own Sorrows, and *17.*
 called by our proper Name, Foolish Children; our Sins, our Burdens are already great enough; let us not then cry for more Weight, unless we desire to be press'd down to the lower Hell.

IV. The fourth General is, to shew what Rules are to be observed, that we may remember our Creator in the Days of our Youth; and they are these following.

First; We must endeavour to purge our Souls from an over-great Affection to the Body, and to things that only
 D gratify

gratify the Senses. If we pore much on these earthly things, such Vapors will arise thence as will eclipse our Sight of God, and make *the Candle of the Lord* within us to burn with a faint and weak Light: As in the

celes. 9. Grave there is no *Knowledge, no Wisdom*, neither do
 10. *they celebrate and praise God*; 'tis a Land of Forgetful-
 Ifa. 38. ness where the Inhabitants have no Sense, no Remem-
 18. brance; so is the Case of those young Men that are too much intent on worldly Pleasures, they are buried alive; the Body (as the *Platonist* speaks) is made the portable Sepulchre of the Soul, and 'tis no wonder if such, like Persons in their Graves, have no Remembrance, no lively Thoughts of God; their best and upper Chambers are taken up with so many various Pleasures that they have no room left for this more honourable Guest. If we would *remember our Creator in the Days of our Youth*, we must be temperate, and chaste and sober, and restrain our Passions; and when our ancient Pleasures come in a flattering Dress to court our Hearts again, we must scorn their Motions, and tell them that we *now* resolve to *contemplate* God alone, that will afford us more noble, valuable Joys; for as to all worldly things, they are both seen and gone in a very little time, they are in continual Motion, and like a Vessel at Sea, which the People on the Shore see a little while dancing on the Waves, and immediately after 'tis with a swift Course caried out of their Sight. It will be necessary to this Remembrance of our Creator, that we duly govern our Appetites, and improve our time in the pursuite of more generous and sublime Pleasures than of those, that have a Relation only to the Body: far from this *heavenly Temper* are they that eat and drink to excess; and then, instead

instead of remembering their Creator, curse him in their Hearts, as *Job* feared his Children would do, *when they feasted in their Houses every one his day*; and *Job* 1.5. not only so, but having over-charged themselves, they vomit up their Reproaches against the holy Religion of our Saviour, and his blessed Precepts: nor is it to be wondred at, that they are also forgetful of their God, who ~~it may be~~ spend more time in reading of *Plays*, and *Romantick Histories*, and the Adventures of feigned *Heroes*, than in reading of the Bible, that would teach them to remember God, and inspire them with none but lawful Passions, such as have reigned in the Breasts of those worthies, who have endured all imaginable Dangers, with a valour more than human, for the Love they bore to their Creator, and who well deserve our Imitation. Nor are they less unmindful of God who are much addicted to sinful Games and Sports, where the Devil often is the greatest Gainer, and at which they for a Trifle, throw their Souls away; and such also deserve no better Character than spend more time at their Glasse, than on their knees in Prayer. That are more concerned if a Wig or a Cravat fit wrong, than for all the interior Blemishes and Disorders of the Mind; that are more observant of the Rules of Civility, than of the Laws of God, though both these might consist well enough together: Such also cannot be supposed to be mindful of their Creator, that use a greater Care to be affable and courteous in their Behaviour, than to be holy in their Lives; tho, when duly limited, an agreeable, chearful Conversation, and an upright Heart before God are things greatly necessary for the Comfort of Life, and the Honour of Religion. I delight not to insist upon the

Dissert.
xxviii.

Smith's
Select
Disc.
p. 11.

Miscarriages of Youth, God knows they are too many; nor will I enlarge upon the Crime of such, that in their Health, consult their Taylor more than their Divine; and while they strive to cloath their less valuable part in a genteel splendid Habit, have their poor unregarded Souls full of Ulcers and Putrefaction, and void of Grace. This too great Affection to the Body, and the sensual Life darkens the Glory of the Mind, and the intemperate, luxurious Person to use the Comparison of *Maximus Tyrius* upon this Subject, 'Is troubled with a Vertigo in his Head, and like one that has drunk too much Wine, he is not far from Madness, but that now and then he recollects himself, and uses a little Reason, but by and by that Light is quench'd, and he reels to and fro again, as one left in the Dark, and in a strange Place. Thus he is lost as to all wise and sober Considerations; and 'tis no wonder if he who has forgot himself, forget his God, or that he, who is not Master of his own Thoughts, have not the sense of his Creator there. When the Manhood is drowned, 'tis no wonder that we see not the Religion floating on the Water. With these sensual Delights are Young Men too often charmed asleep: And then like Persons in a Dream, they cannot govern their own Spirits, which will often be possess'd with the meanest, inconsiderable things. The Philosophers (as one observes) 'To separate the Mind from things sensual, devised Mathematical Contemplations, whereby the Souls of Men might shake off their Dependency on Sense, and learn to go alone, without the Crutch of any sensible, or material thing to support them, and so be a little inured, being once got above the Body, to converse freely with Immaterial

*S*terial Natures. So should we learn to separate our Affections from what is present, and to let them frequently take their Flight to the Heaven above, the Throne of God; the sight of which we lose, when we bring upon our selves the Punishment of the Serpent, when we creep on this Earth, and lie groveling in the Dust. What will all the Cares that Young Men take about this mortal, ruinous Habitation avail, when they must ere long exchange their fine Cloaths for a winding Sheet, and when they are nailed up in their Coffins, what better will they be for all their gorgeous Apparel, and their dainty Food? Or, will it be a good Plea in Judgment, if the Young Man should say thus; 'Lord, I spent so much time abroad, 'so much in the Tavern, so much on my Recreations, 'and my worldly Business, that I had none left to remember thee, or to think of the true State of my 'own Soul? Or rather, will not the Soul of such an one hereafter be amaz'd, when being cloathed with *the Garments of Heaviness*, he shall be forc'd to cry out after this or the like manner? 'Oh that the many Days I spent in Vanity, I had laid out to prepare 'my Soul, for the Hour of my Change, and the Day 'of Judgment, then I had been in a safe and quiet 'Harbour; whereas now, I am begirt with Lightning 'and Thunder, Storms and Tempests, and must never 'see the Sun shine again! Oh that the Discourse I 'made so often about my worldly Pleasures, about 'new Modes and Fashions, I had made of God and 'Heaven, I should not then have seen those horrid 'Objects of Terror, nor have had my Ears peirc'd with 'these hideous Shrikes of my fellow Prisoners! I 'would not in the days of my Life on Earth remember
God

'God, but now I must remember him whether I will
'or not, and no more as a Friend, but as an Enemy,
'no more as a Father, but as an angry Judg.

2. Secondly; *If we would remember our Creator in the days of our Youth, we must avoid the Company of such, who, as we may judg by their Practise, have him not in all their Thoughts.* You are not willing to venture your

Bodies among those that are infected with some dangerous Distemper, or in a contagious Air, and will you hazard the Welfare of your better part among those, who

Rom. 3. are leproous all over, and whose *Throat is an open Sepul-*
13. *chre*; who if you be a Picture will deface it, if you be a

Glas they will spoil it with their tainted Breath? Do you expect to have a serious Remembrance of your
Psal. 1.1. Creator, if you converse with such as sit *in the Chair of Scorners*, and deride Religion, tho their Scoffs against it are to be accounted as ridiculous as it would be in a blind Man that knows not the Comfort and Benefit of Light to rail against the Sun? would it not be disingenious and base for a Man to quarrel at the Light by which he sees, or at the Air in which he breaths, and shall we not account them unworthy of our Friendship, that speak against God, that God that

Acts 17. made them, and in whom *they live, and move, and have*
28. *their Being*? 'Tis in such Company that Satan waits for

our halting, and we should be as careful to avoid it, as we would a place where we certainly knew there was a Mine sprung and a Match lighted to fire the Train, and blow us up: 'Tis there the Devil lies in wait for Youth, and because he knows, that Age is much affected with Credit and Reputation, he endeavours to cloath those Sins in a genteel, Fashionable Dress, which would be frightful did they appear in their own ugly
Shape,

Shape; and when this infernal Serpent has by his insinuating Methods proselited one Young Man, he instructs him in his hellish Arts, and sends him abroad as his Emissary to gain many more, to seek Advantage from such Society is, as if we thought we could no where find a Cure but in a *Lazaretto*, no where Health, but in the Chambers of the Sick. How many poor Young Men have in such Company lost their Innocence, and have had their Souls diseased and benumbed not sensible of their ill State *till a Dart struck* Prov. 7. 23. *through their Liver*, which none could pull out again? How many have by this means been nipt in the Bud, and spoiled that gave fair hopes to their poor Parents of their After-fruitfulness by their early Blossoms? they that were once serious, and well-disposed, by associating with careless, profane Livers, have lost their former Tenderneſs, their fear of Sin, their sense of God? How many ingenious Tempers have been depraved by this one great Stratagem, so that they have employed the Talents that were given them by God, to arm his Enemies, to raise War against him in his own Dominions, and with the Tools he put into their Hands they built the Kingdom of the Devil? and as it would be but a poor Commendation of a Man to say, He very ingeniously made himself away, or, He neatly cut his own Throat, so these deserve no good Character, who are only witty to promote their own Misery, thinking to be wiser than God; they make their own Hell while they are alive, and poor Creatures are hasting to lie down in a Bed of eternal Sorrows, and (which aggravates the Terror of it) with Laughter, and a Joke. How many by the ill Example of their Companions, have cast off the Respect they once paid to their great Master,

- Mat. 24. Master, and have learn'd to eat and drink with the Drunken, and to smite him and his Servants too, with their violent and bitter Tongues? They have been perswaded to look upon their once dear and sweet Religion, as a tedious, melancholy thing. And have parted with the Favour of God, the Hopes of Glory, and the real Pleasures of another World for the poor Joys of this; they have become as much the sworn Opposers of all that is good, as if they had been baptiz'd in the Name of the Devil, and not in the Name of Jesus. How many sober Parents have to the Grief of their Hearts, seen by this means, the Children of their Hopes, the Children of their Prayers, tainted with Vice and Wickedness? they have seen the Children they once instructed, led away with Error; and those, to whom they taught the Language of Heaven, speaking the Dialect of Hell, and running with such Violence in the broad way, as if they were afraid they should not come to their everlasting Sufferings soon enough. Thus they forget their Creator, and make a Rod for their own Backs, which will hereafter, like
- Exod. 4. the *Rod of Moses*, be turn'd into a *Serpent*, and devour
3. all their Hopes; and, what Comfort will they, that now scoff at all that is grave and serious, have hereafter, when those Tongues that are set on Fire of Hell, shall be cursing in those Flames, and not be able to ject any more. With what pale Faces, and dejected Eyes, will they that are now jovial, and brisk together, look upon the dismal Conclusion of their ill Choice, when the Scene will be changed, and instead of Mirth, there will be *Lamentation, weeping, and*
- Mar. 8. *gnashing of Teeth*; their Eyes that now run after Vanity, will then be fixed in the solitary Contemplation of

of their great Loss. And their Thoughts, that are now roving and disorder'd, will then be their own Torture: with what hideous Cries will they then lament their early Follies, and upbraid one another? 'Had it not 'been for thee, cruel Creature (will one say to his miserable Companion) I had not fallen into this helpless, 'irrecoverable State; had it not been for thee, I that 'am now pale with Hunger, and faint with Thirst, 'might have drank of that River, the Streams where- 'of *make glad the City of God*; and have been feasting Psal. 46. 'with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all holy Souls, 4. 'at the *Supper of the Lamb*. Had it not been for thee, 'instead of being confin'd to these Chains, and this dole- 'ful Prison, I might have been walking in *the Streets of 'the New Jerusalem*: but now the Gulf is fix'd, my 'Hopes are gone, and my Sun is set. And all that such a distressed Creature shall receive from such a miserable Complaint, will only be, to hear the like sad Language from his Neighbour, and so that deep and ugly Cave will ring with the noise of their Stripes, and the lamentable Cries wherewith they will for ever salute one another, saying, *Wo unto us, for we have sinned!* Lam. 5. wo unto us, for we have sinn'd our selves into this 16. burning Lake!

Thirdly; *Another Rule to be observ'd by those that would now remember their Creator in the days of their Youth, is to accustom themselves to frequent Retirement, and Solitude.* Most of that Irreligion and Contempt of God that is in the Minds of Young People, arises from the Neglect of the many convenient Seasons, which they might improv'd to self-examination. They will not give themselves leave to think, or reflect upon their own Actions: for if they did but separate some little

E

Portions

Portions of their time, tho but one quarter of an hour in a day, seriously to think what it is to dy, and when that is over, to go to Judgment, and what pains are necessary to prepare their Souls for things so solemn, and so great ; it were morally impossible they should forget their Creator, and disobey his Call. 'Tis not long, 'might the Young-man say, till this Body of mine that 'was made of Earth and Dust, shall be resolved into 'common Dust again ; 'tis not long till it will be clothed 'in its last Robes, and be insensible of what is grateful, or 'delicious ; it will be worn out like a moth-eaten Garment, after all the sweet Odours and Perfumes, after 'all the Cost and Charge I have laid out upon it. Now 'then begin, O my Soul, to take thy leave of thy dearest Companion that will shortly bid thee farewell, and 'warn thee by its irreparable Delays, to seek for thy 'self a more lasting Habitation. Tho I have now (might 'he go on in his Meditation) the Company of my 'Relations, and my Friends, yet ere long they will 'stand weeping at my Bed's side, when they see me going from them by my self into the silent melancholy 'Vale. Tho I now have my numerous Enjoyments, and 'my full Tables ; yet when I have sat a little longer, I 'must rise, for Death will come and take me away. Such Reflections as these, would help Young Men very much in the Remembrance of their Creator now ; and engage them not to put off such useful Thoughts till their dying Day. But alas, the most, instead of this serious Employment, slight the Consideration of God and their Souls from day to day ; they run upon the score, and so long spend their Substance, till like ill Tradesmen they are unwilling to cast up their Books, to make up their Accounts, and to look into their own Souls ;
they

they so long defer to speak with their own Consciences, till at last they have no Message to them, but of Wo and Terror. So it must not be with us; we must retire from the multitude of Temptations that we meet with in the World, and reckon those happy Seasons wherein we may converse with God. The Memory of a Person is disturb'd with a great Noise; and so will our Thoughts be among the busy Cares and Clamours of the World: Have we time to spend among our Acquaintance and our Friends, and have we none for God, that is our best Friend? Can we take delight in the Company of others, and yet take none in his, in whom all the Myriads of the blessed Angels, and the glorious Saints, and the whole Society of sincere Worshippers in the Church on Earth daily rejoyce? Can we be solicitous *what to eat and drink, and what to put on*; and not be as much careful about the more violent, and pressing Necessities of our Souls? Or have we any Business that is more weighty than this, how we may please our Creator, grow in Grace, and avoid the Wrath to come? We should when we awake, take *the Wings of the Morning* and fly up to Heaven, and every one of us say, *This day will I remember God*; and in the Evening, if we have been stedfast in our purpose, we must praise him for his Assistance, and do the same again. No Business can excuse any for the neglect of so great a Duty. Even the Apprentice must remember that he has a great Master in Heaven to serve; and if the Affairs of his Trade require a more than ordinary Care, he may rise a little sooner in the Morning, and go to bed a little later, as knowing that no Service for others can dispense with the Allegiance he has sworn to God; and that he will never have cause to repent of the time he spends in serious fervent Prayer: and when the Young Man is in his Retirement, we may suppose him to address himself to his Creator in this or the like manner.

Mat. 6. 31.

‘O my merciful Creator, view from thy sacred Throne a poor Sinner, that am covered with Shame and Blushing, when I think I have long, too long been forgetful of thee and of my true Self: be thou my Physician, for I am diseased; be thou my Satisfaction for all the Time I have wandered to and fro in a strange Land. I have been seeking Rest,

- L^{uke} 15. 'but have found none. I am not worthy to be called thy Son any
 19' 'more; but let thy Bowels yearn over a poor Prodigal, that now
 'sees his Error, and is resolv'd by thy Assistance, not to run a-
 'way from his Duty, nor to sin again. O God, my God, early will
 Psal 63. 1. 'I seek thee, my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee in a
 'dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is. 'Tis true, Lord, I had
 Prov. 23. 5 'once set mine Eyes on that which was not; but henceforth I will
 'humbly make mention of thy Name, and contemplate thy Glo-
 'ries, and not gaze with Delight on this cheating, vain
 'World again. Behold, according to my Baptismal En-
 'gagement and vow, I give up what is thy own to thee, I
 'surrender all that I have, or am, all the Faculties and
 'Powers of my Soul, to be thine for ever. And here I now
 'promise, as in thy Presence, and as I ever hope to hear a
 'welcome Sentence in the day of Christ, that I will not any
 'more be led away with ill Examples, nor conspire with Sin-
 'ners to rebel against Thee; be thou therefore, O my gra-
 'cious Creator, the Director of my Steps, the Guide of my
 'Life, my Strength in Weakness, my Friend in Trouble;
 'and inspire me with Courage and Wisdom to manage my
 'self well in the hour of my Combat, when by my old E-
 'nemies, the Flesh, the Devil and the World, against whom
 'I now declare a perpetual War, I shall be set upon.

4. Fourthly; *Another Rule that is to be observ'd of those that
 would remember their Creator now in the days of their Youth; is,
 to improve the several Passages of Providence either to the Church
 of God, or themselves, to this end.* We have all great reason to

- II. 117. 4. think of him, and to celebrate his Praise, who as the Royal
 Prophet speaks, *has caus'd his wonderful Works to be remembered.*
 And we of this Nation are more peculiarly engaged thank-
 fully to commemorate the Miracles of his Mercy, which ap-
 peared in the great Deliverance that he gave to our Fore-
 fathers as on this day; tho we are young, we all share in the
 blessed Effects of such a wonderful Deliverance. The *Papists*
 indeed that long envied the Wellfare of our *Sion*, thought to
 have made *England* once more a Slave to the Prince of Dark-
 ness, and like to *Rome*; Even *We* have Reason to be thankful;
 for had their Train been fired, and the Blow given, there had
 been long ere this, nothing to be seen in our Hemisphere, but
 swarms

swarms of Locusts from the bottomless Pit, nothing but Flies and Serpents, and all the Plagues of *Egypt*. And is not *the God of England, the God of our Fore-Fathers, and our God*, worthy to be remembred? that has hitherto kept these Frogs from croaking in our Houses and our Bed-Chambers? Far be it from us either to forget such a God, or to mock him, as we shall, if we thank him for our Escape out of the House of Bondage, and yet (as too many in our days) be willing to return again thither: If, like foolish Children, we cry for the Leeks and Garlick of others, when we have at home better Food. 'Tis fit we should remember the *God of this great Deliverance*, that so we may never leave our own pure and holy Faith, for an Idolatrous, and a false Religion, the Religion of *Rome*, (that is indeed a scandal to the Name) and that instead of Meekness and Love, the true Lineaments of all the Followers of Jesus, has by its cruel Designs no other than the Features of the Devil, the *Great Murderer from the beginning*. Jhn 8.14
And when the Plotters delighted in those *Works of Darkness*, they acted as true Children of him their Father, who flies the Light. When they *digg'd as deep as Hell*, they were but in their own Element; for all they that are born from Heaven, carry upon them Forbearance, Peace, and Innocence, which is to resemble indeed a patient holy God. I am the more willing to enlarge upon this, both because of the Respect I bear to that Authority that enacted the Observation of this as a Day of general Thanks-giving over all the Nation; and because young Men (to some of which the Providence of God has given me this occasion chiefly to speak) are more liable to be deceived with Error, and the Pretences of the *Romish Church*, than others are; but I hope, when we remember this *Hellish Plot*, we shall have an everlasting *Abhorrence* of that cruel Sect, that conceives and brings forth, and by its established Doctrines, avows and legitimates such monstrous Villanies, to carry on or abet which, a sober Heathen would be ashamed: Let us still remember the Author of *this great Mercy*, and then, tho we may be assaulted even while we are young, with their Batteries, we shall never be so foolish as to embrace their Opinions, and leave our own well-grounded Faith; which were to prefer Night before the day, Imprisonment before a *Jubile*, and the Clouds

Clouds of *Egypt* before the pleasant Light of our *Goshan*. Then we shall not, when we are *free-born*, long for Slavery; nor when we are unaccustom'd to the Yoke, pray that it may be put upon our Necks. This Remembrance of the Mercy of our Creator will preserve us, that we shall never be so undutiful as to leave our *Jerusalem* which is *from above*, and free, the Mother of us all, to run to a Stranger, to their *Hagar*, which *gendreth to Bondage*; from the Protestant Religion to Popery, whose Children, like the Children of *Negroes* under the Service of our Merchants in Foreign Plantations, are in a State of Bondage as soon as they enter into the World. Thus ought the former Deliverances that have been granted to our Fore-Fathers, the Blessings of which are by them conveyed to us, to stir us up to remember God; as also those that we have enjoyed in our Days, particularly that from the late *Popish Plot*, which has hitherto by his Mercy been prevented from bringing forth our Ruine and Desolation; and it will never be able to do that, unless our Forgetfulness of God prove a *Celcer*, and midwife it into the World. We have had a large Experience of his Goodness, which is continued in large measures to this very day, so that we have reason to cry out with that holy Man: *How precious are thy Thoughts unto us, O God, how great is the Sum of them?* It is too great to be numbred: And shall we answer all his Care and Love with Oblivion, Contempt, and Scorn? Shall we forget him, when all our Mercies, and all the Creatures, would lead us to him, as the Star did the *Wise Men* to Christ? How many things may we daily observe, which with a little Consideration would help us to remember God. Thus if I see one that is poor and diseased, and begs about the Streets, and has no Friends to help him, I ought to remember God, and thank him, that it is not my sad Case. When I see others on their Death-beds, I ought to remember him that while he smites the Tabernacle of another, spares mine. When I am well, I should praise the Author of my Health, and when I am pained, bless him that my Pains are not the Tortures and Woes of Hell. When I see one that will be drunk and swear, I should remember my Creator, and bless him for restraining me from the like Sins; and that when others are running to Destruction, he
has

Psal. 139.
17.

has shewed me the sweet Path of Life. Thus every young Man whatever his Calling, State or Condition be, whether he be at home, or abroad, may by heavenly, serious Ejaculations still remember God, and *walk in his Fear all the day long.* The Prov. 13. Tradesman may do it in his Shop, the Student in his Closet, 17 and the diseased on his sick Bed; and when the Fire of such Meditations shall burn in our Souls, it will scare away vain Thoughts, and discourage the roaring Lion, and the other Beasts of the Forrest, when they would fain set upon us.

5. Fifthly; Let us improve the Deaths of other young Men to this purpose, that we may remember our Creator, and prepare for our own. How many have we known that were of as healthful, and vigorous a Constitution as we are, that by a Surfeit, or an acute Feaver, have in a few days been snatcht away? How many that were travelling on the same Road with us a while agoe, are now at their long home, lying in the Grave; and should not we by their early Departure, *learn to dy?* It would not be tedious to us in this Sense, to live in *Golgotha*, or to *dwelt among the Tombs*, when we have in them seen *the end of all Men*; we should not any more love the World, nor its Enjoyments and Pleasures, seeing they will vanish in the twinkling of an Eye, and after all the poor Satisfaction they have given us, fall into the dead Sea. The Psal. 39. 5. Psa. 39. 5. singing-bells of others loudly tell us, that, *Man in his best Estate is altogether Vanity*, and what they have undergone, will in a few days or hours more, be our own Lot. Tho they are gone before, we must tread in their Steps, and go the same way. When that hour is come, all our Friends and Acquaintance cannot hold us; for we that now hear, and move, and speak, Isa 38. 18. shall fly away into a vast Expanse, and not *behold Man with the Inhabitants of this World any more*. As we have seen the pale Looks, and have heard the last Voice of others, so shall we our selves in the like manner be made Spectacles of Mortality to those that remain after us. We and all our Companions must take a long Farewel of each other, and not meet again till the day of the general Resurrection. And is it too soon to remember our Creator, when we have seen many as young as we are, breath their last? and we that now mourn for others, know not how soon our Friends may do the same for us,

us, and celebrate our Funerals. Or, shall we be excusable, if we do not secure our selves, and prepare to be gone, when we have seen the Houses of our Neighbours fired, and have been often told, that our own will decay? Do we thus requite that God, that has given us a longer time, and space wherein to repent? and when he has spared us beyond the Weakness of our Infant Age, shall we be Children in *Understanding*, shall we never come to Years of Discretion, and know what is for our Good? When God took away that Young Man, that is the occasion of this Discourse, he might at the same time, or before, have taken away you or me; and why do we survive his Death, and the Deaths of many others, but that we may set *our House in order*, and be well prepared for the time of our Change, that will soon be at hand? If we do not now repent, what shall we say to the patient God hereafter, that when the Arrows have been shot on the right and the left, has made them to pass by us? Others are cut down and we are yet standing in the Vineyard, but to what end, but that we may to his Praise bring forth much early Fruit? If we do not thus, what Plea shall we make at his Bar, and how shall we meet our Parents and our holy Friends in the day of Judgment? The Time is coming, when Riches and Honour, Health and Beauty, Credit and Reputation among Men, will be of no value, nor will Gold and Silver, the Idols of this, be currant in the next World. We should not therefore be like those young People that are only serious in the House of Mourning, or when they see their Friends carried to the Grave, but in the next vain Company suffer the Impressions of their Mortality to wear off again. We must be always sober in our Conversation, as not knowing when we our selves shall be gone; only this we may know, that as the Years we have already lived are soon past, so will those that are to come with the same swift Motion pass away. The longest Life here on Earth is but as a Moment, if compar'd with the future Eternity: 'Tis as a flash of Lightning to the whole Element of Fire, just seen, and then vanish. And can it after all this, be too soon to serve our Creator, with our best Affections to implore his Pardon, to call on his Name, when ere long there will be no more use of Prayer, no more the Tenders of Salvation, no more Time?

Sixthly;

Sixthly. *If we would Remember our Creator now, in the Days of our Youth: Let us think with our selves how dreadful our Case would be, should we be surprized by Death before we had done this.* If we cannot perform this Work now, when our earthly House is in good Repair, how shall we do it, when the Foundations, and the Building both will be destroyed; and, it may be, struck to the Ground on a sudden, as with a Clap of Thunder? If we find our selves Indisposed for our ordinary Business with an aking Head, or Tooth; do we think to mind our Salvation when every Part of our Bodies shall be racked with the most violent, and painful Agonies; and when we shall have no Intervals of Ease, but be rudely treated by the Diseases that come before to clear the way for the King of Terrors? Or shall we stay till the Blow be given, or the Season past? It may be, we think there is no Danger, or that we shall have time enough hereafter; but our Disease is not the less for our Insensibility; and to conceit our selves Well, when in the Judgment of God, and his Word, we are much out of Order, is the worst Symptom of our approaching Death. What better would it be for a sick Man to fall into a Slumber, and to dream of Health, when he is given over as hopeless, and not for this World any longer? What better would he be to think his Candle will last for many Hours, when it is just falling into the Socket, and yeilds but a little dying Blaze, which he through Mistake fancies a true lasting Flame? What better would a Prisoner be to dream, in the Night, of Freedom, and a Pardon, when he sees the Officer entering in the Morning, to carry him away to Execution?

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VI.

tion! And shall we be in a better State, if we put off our Creator with Delays, till *Death enter into the Windows*, and deprive us of our Light, and siezing on us, by a Warrant from God, hale us away to the Prison of the Grave, and to the glorious awful Tribunal, whether we will or not? In what Mountains shall we seek a Refuge, if we make no Provision for our selves till the Floods come, and the weak Pillars, whereon we now lean, be wash'd away? How many young Men are now awake, and that for ever, in the Flames of Hell, that never would open their Eyes till they came thither? That *were taken away living, and in the Wrath of God, before their Pots could scell the Thorns*, before they had any real Sense of their near Danger? And as the Case of that Person is very sad, that when he has been newly rack'd, and while he is yet sore and pained, is to be carried again to the Torture: So is theirs, that are twice to dye; whose Souls go trembling from the Body, to more intolerable Pains; that go from the first, to the second; from a Temporal, to an Eternal Death. How many are now in the Regions of perpetual Storms, that thought, because their Sun once shin'd, they should always have good Weather, and a clear Day! For God's Sake then, and for our own, let us be Religious betimes, and not suffer our selves to be bound with Cords, in the Houses of our Enemies; with more Sins; lest we lose our *Strength, and God depart from us, when we think, like Sampson in the Hands of the Philistins, torise and go abroad with the same Freedom that we did at other times.* The Lamp of our Life may be drown'd with too much Moisture, or when we think all is calm, be blown out with a sudden

Pl. 58. 9.

Judg. 16.
29.

den Blast, or a stormy Wind, and leave us in the Dark; and when it has once expired, there will be no Supplies of Oyl to make it burn again. And then, like the blinded Youth of *Sodom*, we shall reel to and fro, and not find a Door of Hope, till we feel the scalding Drops of Vengeance, that will by degrees swell into a Flood, and carry us away to the great Lake of Fire. This will be the Consequent of our vain Delays, and oh, how dreadful will it be, when instead of the Bosom of *Abraham*, we shall find our selves in the cold Arms of Despair; and instead of the Joys of Heaven, have in our guilty Souls, *the Worm that never dyes*? If Men break in the World, they may by the kind Assistance of their Friends, and Benefactors, be set up again; If they be Imprisoned, they may through the Mediation of the same be releas'd; but what shall become of those, that have no Friends, that have nothing wherewith to pay their Debts, and must languish and pine away in a tedious Bondage, never to be eas'd of their Sorrows, never to be released? And such, and more dreadful, will be the State of those young Men, that are surpriz'd in the moment of their Wickedness, and laid in the Chains of Hell unawares. Dare we then forget our Creator now, when whole Troops of so great Calamities, are upon the March against us, and we know not when their Leader, that rides upon the *pale Horse*, will give the Word, and command them to fall upon us? If we now disregard the Checks of our own Consciences, they will hereafter challenge us to give them Satisfaction, and be revenged on us, for all the Affronts that we have put upon them. Sleep on we may, but it will be very sad, if we awake not before the Decree

Gen. 19. 11

Mark. 9.
44.

Rev. 6. 8.

Pfal. 73.
18.

1. Thes.
v. 3.

for our Execution be gone forth, and before the killing Sword is at our Breasts. If we will take no Care, *even when our Feet stand in slippery Places*; we may slide into the dark Pit, from which there will be no Redemption. We may be surprized with the loud Thunder, and the roaring Cannon, when we think there is no Danger: and when we flatter our selves with the vain Hopes of Peace, and Safety; sudden Destruction may come upon us, as Travel upon a Woman with Child. To what shall I compare the Miseries of that young Man, that is taken away in the midst of all his Pleasures, and before he hath well thought of Death? 'Tis as dreadful, as if you should see a Person in the midst of all his Mirth and Laughter, immediately fall down Dead, so that he cannot by all the Tears of his Friends, nor by all the Chaffing, and Applications, that are made, be fetch'd to Life again. A Surprizal that carries with it as great Horror and Amazement, as does the sudden falling of a cruel Enemy into the Tents of a luxurious wanton Army; that spares neither Young nor Old, that *mingle's their Blood with the Sacrifices* they made to their lustful Appetites, and gives them no time either to Arm, or to cry for Quarter. 'Tis as Dreadful, as if a Massacre should happen among a company of little Children playing in the Street; that, while they suspected nothing, are cut in a thousand pieces, and carried away to the other World in a Sea of their own Blood. The sudden untimely Death of careless young Men, is as dreadful as a general Inundation; that while Men are asleep, breaks over all Bounds, and carries them, their Houses, and their Goods, away together. Have we then no Pity for our selves, or do we resolve not to prepare

prepare for our Tryal till the Assize come, and the Judge is seated on the Bench! Is it a small, or a tolerable thing, to be snatch'd away in one Moment from Life and Hope, to have our Souls violently torn from our Bodies, and to be sent from under the Dews of Heaven, and a chearful pleasant Habitation; to be scorched with flaming Wrath, and to Live in a *Land of Darknes*, where is all that can afflict or grieve the separated Spirit? If we were assured by certain Intelligence from the unseen World, that this were the last Sermon we were to hear; this the last time that we should have a Call to Remember God, and to Repent; and that before we Enjoy another of the Days of the Son of Man, we should hear our final Doom, and be either in Heaven above, or Hell beneath. Oh, with what Cries should we rend the Heavens, with what Earnestness should we pour out our Souls in Prayer, and as a Criminal that is condemned to dye, and is not ready for so great a Change, make use of all our Friends to begg of God that he would Reprieve us, and spare us a little longer! that we may acquaint our selves with him, and make our Peace *before we go hence*, and be no more: With how many Tears should we then bewail our early Follies, and not listen to the Charms of sensual worldly Pleasures, or the Temptations of the Devil! And why should we not do the same now, seeing we know not but that may be our Case? We know neither the Hour, or the Day when our Lord will come: nor when Death, that is by his Commission going its Circuit, and has already past its Sentence upon many others, will Arrive at our Place, and call us also to the Barr.

Psal. 39.

Mat. 24. 42.

I might here have shew'd you how many and how great would be the Advantages of an early Remembrance of your Creator, how by this you would be a great comfort to your Ministers and Parents, and a Blessing both to this Age and to the next. As also that hereby you would meet with prosperous Success in your affairs, and, after many years Labour, sweet Repose, and the Possession of an inward, unspeakable Peace in your way to Glory. And besides that you might, in a great measure, prevent those Calamities that have at a distance long threatned a secure careless People: but now are at our very Doors and likely to seize on your Native Country, which cries to you that are young to have pity upon her. I might here entreat you, as you would not see a Famine of the Word, nor your Teachers driven to more solitary Corners, nor after it has long stood upon the Threshold, see the final departure of the Glory, that you would now remember your Creator, but I shall leave these to your more serious Consideration.

And now I shall endeavour to move you to this great Duty, by setting before you the Example of that young man, whose death presented me with the sad occasion of this Sermon; though he be dead, yet his *Death speaks this* to us all, that we should in health remember our Creator, and not defer so great a Work till we are just upon the Borders of the Grave. We may think we are yet many paces off, but when we have breathed a little longer, we shall be there, we shall go, and dwell with him, and with many others, that were gathered from such Assemblies as this; to the greater Congregation of the dead, we shall go from the noise of populous
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Towns and Cities into that silent forlorn Desert, and from Spirits that move in Bodies, to those that are unclothed in that vast World, which we, the Pilgrims on Earth, never saw, and when we have well performed the Duties of our present state, we shall go from moving in this Lower Firmament, to move in that which is above all that we see, and which is the proper Region and Sphere of the Soul, the Seat and Habitation of the blest'd, of all those that while they were on Earth remembred their Creator and believed in Christ.

I shall not draw the Picture of the *Young Gentleman* (of whom I am now to speak) in any other Colours then those which were reckoned to make up his true Complexion when he was alive, and which were taken from him by such as had opportunity by Converse and Acquaintance to observe the several parts of his Behaviour.

I. In his more early days, he was sent to the *University of Dublin in Ireland*, that there he might obtain the useful knowledge of the Liberal Arts, which (when duely studyed) are a great Ornament, and Glory to the mind, and render a man more capable of Noble Thoughts and Actions, and greatly conduce to the making his Life not only more comfortable to himself but more useful to others, but, (as is the deplorable condition of too many young men in such publick places of Education where the *Boar out of the Forest*, the Devil waits to spoil the tender Vines that are newly planted there) he was by the perswasion of ill Associates led away to some things not worthy of Commendation. And when God that designed Mercy for his Soul, not only checked him in his course by some crosse Providences, of which he still retained

tained the sense, but put it into the heart of his Parent to send him over hither to be under the care of a Divine her faithful Friend; and among Persons more studious, what by the Instruction of his Tutor, and the benefit of good Examples, and the Blessing of God on both, he began to change for the better; and as many that are in a Consumption while they are in a place full of hurtful vapours sensibly revive when they breath in a purer Air; so did he, as was evident by his Behaviour and Discourse, wherein he would often confess his former Errors, and greatly bewail his former too great easiness to be impos'd upon; he blessed God that he was disentangled from the snare of ill Company, resolving never to be a slave in such Bonds again.

II. He was of a *Liberal Charitable Disposition*, and, like his Creator, full of pity to the Poor, and the miserable, and it was a remarkable Instance of this, that once seeing a poor man begging at the door, who had been let out of Prison but the day before, he gave him Money, and ordered him to come the next day for a fresh Suite of Cloaths, that he then wore himself, and which according to his promise were then bestowed upon him; and after this walking abroad with one of his Acquaintance he took occasion thence to raise a serious Discourse of the Providence of God, that distributes his common Gifts in greater Abundance to one, then to another, saying that while he had a plentiful enjoyment of the World, he would do good to the Poor, not knowing how soon that might be his own case; he did not only as he had opportunity cloath the Naked and relieve the miserable, but endeavoured to excite in others, the same willingness

to give, shewing them, that this was the most excellent, and lovely Temper; he well knew that the best way to improve his Estate, was to put some considerable Portions of it into the hands of the Poor, being assured that God, who had engaged his Word, would see him paid again; he knew that to be charitable was to be Divine, and that the seed he threw upon the Low Valleys, would be watered with the kind influences of the upper Springs, and yield him a glorious Harvest, which we have reason to believe he now reaps in the Heavens above. And oh, that all the young men that hear me this Evening would imitate so rare a President! then they would not be under the Condemnation of those that lay out all their Money on their fine Cloaths, or to gratifie their Appetites, that spend many pounds *per Annum* on their Vain Pleasures, their Sports and Recreations, but it may be lay not by one shilling for the service of the Poor all the Year long. These careless Stewards will have a sad Account to give when their Master comes again, and enquires to what use they have put the many Talents, they were entrusted with.

3. He was once much addicted to *Gaming*, but seeing the evil of it, quite left it off, knowing that all his Time well improved was little enough to prepare for Eternity, and that his Riches and his Time were given him to better purpose than to be so vainly thrown away.

4. He would often Lament his Undutifulness, which he thought was the more inexcusable in one that had, so indulgent, so kind a Mother, as his was; and when the solitary Gentlewoman shall hear of his

great Sorrow for this Sin in particular, no doubt but she will bless God, that all her Tears and her Prayers which she once made but with little hope were not lost upon him, and that though he once was such, he did not go a Rebel to the Grave. And though he be taken away from possessing a large and fair Estate here on Earth, yet she may have good Reason to believe, that he is gone to possess what is more valuable and more sure, *an Inheritance with the Saints in Light*, and though she was not there to see the Tears wherewith he bewailed his Sins, nor to hear his Zealous Fervent prayers for Holiness and pardon; Yet she hath even for this, Cause to be thankful, for it may be it was a Mercy to her, not to see him in his Agonies and Pains, lest the sight of these might have too much oppressed her Spirits, and have made her Sorrows more sharp, and violent. And though she was at a place far distant; yet it may be a Comfort to her to think that he was not without that help which is needful to sick persons, and that he wanted nothing that could be judged proper, either to his outward, or spiritual Necessities; it may be some mitigation to her Grief, to think that he breathed out his Soul among such who had a tender sense of his Condition, and assisted him with their Prayers; she may be comforted when she has Cause to believe that this her Son is not lost; and though she had not the Opportunity to take a Solemn Leave of him when he was going hence, yet that she shall see him again in the Latter day, and with more Joy and Satisfaction then she ever saw him when he was in this Vale; and this will add to the pleasure of their meeting then, that they will not part again, though he

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*At Dublin.

did not remain to bear up the Name of her Family, yet she may hope that he now makes one in the Glorious Family and House of our Lord, that shall not be turned into a House of Mourning by the Sickness or Death of any that have so great a privilege as to dwell there. She has Reason to lay aside her Sorrows, when she may from his serious holy Frame well conclude, that he that was once her Child is now in his absence from her the Child of God, and shall not languish in pain, nor know any more what it is to die.

V. He once used to swear but had afterward a Lively Sense of the horrid, damnable Nature of that Sin, and left it off. And though some of the Evils of his former Education, now and then returned upon him; yet when faulty, he was freely willing to admit of Convictions, and to be reproved, and to learn better things. At first some good Orders in the House where he was seemed strange to him, but he soon submitted to them, and owned it as a Mercy that God brought him thither.

VI. In the Time of his Health, he was over-heard by some in the same House to pray in his Closet twice a day though he did it not with a Pharisaical Ostentation, nor to be thought Jevour. And would we but be so kind to our own Souls as to imitate him in this, so much Heavenly Pleasure and Comfort would attend our Devotions as would render it a most easie Task for us to remember God.

VII. When he was confined to that Sickness, which proved his last; from the beginning of it, he had upon his Mind, a due Sense of Death; and often when he was in great Pain, he would desire the

Nurse that attended on his Weakness, to read the Scripture to him; when he could not reach it with his own Hand, he desired others to administer to him, that Bread of Life. He was much in Prayer in the midst of his restless Nights, and strong Pains, resolving as long as he could, to lift up those Eyes to Heaven, which he believed would shortly be closed by Death; and to spend that Breath in Desires after Grace, which was every Moment ready to be stop'd. Thus while his Body was detained on his Bed by various Pains, his Soul was swiftly moving towards its proper Center. And though by the Violence of his Disease, he was somewhat stupified for a little while before he died, yet while his Sences continued free in their Exercise, he did with the bitter Cryes of a Penitent, bewail his Sins, expressing a great Hatred of them, and a holy Indignation against himself. Sometimes when he was told of Comfort, he would mournfully say; *You know not, what I feel: My Sins ly very heavy on me, my Sickness is not all, nor is the Anguish of my Body so great as the Anguish of my Soul.* God gave him a very sensible tender Conscience, which though it be grievous for a while, yet is a great Mercy, if compared with the great Judgment of an hard unmelting Heart, which many Sinners, both young and old are punish'd with, so that even when they are on the Rack, they do not confess their Sins, nor seek after God. He was greatly troubled: And thus a loving Physician searches to the bottom of the Sore; and puts his Patient, especially when the Wounds are of a long Continuance, to more then ordinary Pain, that he may perform a great Cure. When a Cloud of Despair seem'd to obscure his

his Comfort, being told of the Pity, and the Love of Christ to the greatest Sinners, the Thoughts of his Saviour revived his dying Hopes, and made him willing to pass through Darknels, to Light, through Pain, to Rest; saying, *I desire the Blood of Christ to cure all my internal Maladies*: And at another time, said, *he desired him above all things*. The Night before his last, he lay very Unquiet, expressing a great sense of Trouble with many Sighs, and Groans; his Nurse rightly guessing that these were the Signs of something greatly afflictive to him, advised him to ease his Mind, which he immediately after did, to him under whose Care he was, with a serious Profession of Sorrow for the Sins he then Confessed, and which he then found to be a great Burthen on his Conscience, though they had been Committed long before. The day before, desiring the Prayers of the same Person, and being ask'd what he would have begg'd of God for him? He answer'd, That God would shew his great Mercy on him, in pardoning his Sins, and healing his Soul, and removing his spiritual Maladies; owning with a due Sorrow his Sins of Omission, and Commission, and those which he had committed against the holy Spirit, that would have reclaimed him from them. He called to mind several suitable places of Scripture, even beyond Expectation; and very pertinently applyed them to the Necessities of his own Case; which argued, that he was no Stranger to that Rule, which can more then all others, teach a young Man best how to cleanse his Waies, and to Remember God: and at last said, that he would be very willing to dye, *if he might have a Sense of the Mercies of Christ, and of Pardon*. Which

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we have good ground to hope he did not come short of.

These were the Speeches, and this the Behaviour of this dying young Man: And lest any may be troubled to think that after so many Prayers, and serious Endeavours as he used, he should have so many Doubts and Fears, about his Title to Forgiveness, and a happy State, I will add this, *viz.* That it is greatly to be Considered, that Satan, whom the Scripture calls a *Lion*; when the Evening of Time is come to any Soul, marches out of his Den, and is then more full of Rage and Violence than he was before: and as dying Bees, or Serpents, thrust out their Stings with greater vehemence; so does he use the greater Force, when he knows his time is but short. He troubles the Souls of good People with dark and mournful Apprehensions of God, and their own Condition, when he sees them just at the Door of Heaven; at which, when they once enter, his Spite is over, and he can do no more. Many Christians he thus Assaults, that are of a long standing in the Vineyard, and therefore it is not to be wondered if he thus tost to and fro this young Man, who was but as a tender Plant.

He had indeed a laborious Conflict, and an hard Passage, but we may well hope, that it was but to him, as a dark Night before a clear Day; and that his Troubles here, were but as the sharp Sauce, the better to prepare his Appetite for the sweeter Taft of Happiness. Many a time the Sun that sets in a Cloud does arise in Glory, and many a Ship at last arrives to a quiet Harbour, that met with Waves, and Storms, and high Winds all the way thither.

Let

Let us also by this Example, be perswaded to Remember our Creator, *now in the Days of our Youth, while the evil Days come not*: For we see 'tis he alone that can speak Peace, and that to him alone we must go at last for Comfort, who can heal our wounded Spirits, and bear us up, when if we should look to all our Friends, they can only bewail our sad Case, but not remove our Sorrows. If we do this, he will write our Names in his *Book of Remembrance*, and Mal. 3. 16, 17. *in that day when he makes up his Jewels, he will spare us, as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him.* Pf. 33. 26. *And when our Heart, and our Flesh fails, he will be the Strength of our Heart, and our Portion for ever.*

We may now see that all the Delights, and Pleasures of the World are of no value, and but *miserable Comforters* in the time of spiritual Distress, from the sense of Sin and Guilt, they will yield us then no Solace, no peaceable Thoughts, no Refreshment; but our God is worthy to be thought upon, who can by his Grace and Favour, uphold and Bless the departing Soul.

To you that were the *Acquaintance of the Deceased*, I shall only say this; now you have stronger Engagements upon you, to Remember your Creator than you had before: for he has by the death of your Companion, sent you a near, and a loud Warning, to prepare for your own. He had but a little, if any Sickness at all, before that which proved his last. Flatter not then your selves with the too great Hopes of long Life, because of your present Health and Strength: For though your earthly Tabernacles have not been undermin'd with many Infirmities, and Diseases, yet you know not but the first

first Storm that comes may shatter them to pieces. You must prepare to follow him, that is gone but a few days before: He, with whom you liv'd, and with whom you had familiar and sweet Friendship, has now taken his Leave of you, and is gone into a far Country, never to return again. He whom you heard praying and discoursing but a little while ago, is now silent in the Dust. He whom you saw once brisk, and lively, you must now see no more, till you and he meet at the Tribunal in the Clouds. You have seen him that was as strong and as healthful, and a few days since as likely to Live as any of you, seized with a mortal Distemper, and after a few uneasy Days, and restless Nights, carried out with a Train of Mourners, and after a little Solemnity, laid into the Grave. I hope therefore, that as often as you Remember your departed Friend (which I persuade myself, will be very frequent) so often at the least, you will with thankful Souls Remember your Creator, that has been pleased, when he cut off him, to shew you greater Favour, to prolong your time, and to give you the Opportunity of hearing this, and other Sermons; when instead of these, you might have heard the more doleful Sound, and Voice of Death. Your Companion has already heard his Sentence, and is now in his everlasting State; and you must ere long hear yours too, therefore now Remember God; but I am fully confident your serious Endeavours to do it, will render it needless for me, to give you a further Exhortation.

To us all, this Example may be of great Use, that we may betimes leave the pursuit of foolish transitory Pleasures, and return home to our Duty, that so

we may like obedient Children, when our Heavenly Father calls, without repining, die; and go to bed; when we have lived a little longer, we that are now together shall be separated with the black Vail of Death, and from this World fly to the Regions of Immortality; and as this Assembly will soon be dissolved so we that are here when we have spoken, and moved, and breathed a little longer, must go to our Long Homes, and sleep in the Chambers of the Grave.

Let us therefore pray, that our passage hither to God, may be speedy, and peaceful, and though we may not perhaps be suffered to see the Faces of one another again in such Meetings as these, yet that we may all have an happy Meeting in the *Assembly of the First Born*, and at the right hand of our Saviour, in the next World. If we desire this, as surely we all do; if we would have Conscience, calm, and quiet, when we come to dye; if we would have a Sense of the Divine Favour, and Assistance when we are to perform our last Service, and to wrestle with the *Last Enemy*; if we would have some draughts of those Consolations that flow from the perpetual Fountain of delight, and mirth of Heaven, while we are below; Let us Remember our Creator, who if we flourish in his Courts here, will in due Season transplant us into the Celestial Paradise, and where we hope to go thither, is no matter how soon we dye, it will be no real Evil, though it be in our youthful days. Can we too soon be with God, too soon at rest from Labour, or shall we be wronged, if we should prosper, while others are afflicted in this World to see many *all Objects* that will pierce their hearts, to see, it may be, the greatest judgments

ents fall upon their Native Country that ever yet
 fell upon a careless backsliding Generation? shall we
 have any Reason to complain, when we are safe
 Landed on the Coast of Heaven, that our passage
 thither was too quick, or shall we murmur that we
 were too soon waisted over, while others were left
 in Storms and Darkness and had a more tedious un-
 comfortable Voyage? No, we shall bless the Wis-
 dom of our Pilot that taught us how to steer so swift,
 and so near a Course, and ever adore his Goodness
 when we look back and see what Dangers, how
 many Shelves and Sands and Rocks were in the way,
 and yet how safely we escaped all these on which
 so many split and were lost for ever. If we now
Remember our Creator when we leave this vexa-
 tious uncertain World, we shall go to the Bosom
 of our Lord and to all those blessed Young men whom
 he gathered into his Garne, betimes, as know-
 ing they were fully ripe for Glory. With
 these and with the Glorious Angels and with all Saints
 shall we join our Anthems, and together make up
 a Melodious Consort to sing the Songs of Sin, having
 remembered our Creation, we shall go to a City
 whose Inhabitants are all of one mind, and where
 they sincerely love one another, to a Church which
 has no mischievous Impulsions, no cruel inflicting
 persecuting Members, and which is free from Cor-
 ruptions, and pure as well as great. We shall go to
 a place where there are no bitter Censures, no re-
 prechful Ignominious Names, and Titles, where
 there is no misunderstanding among Friends, no false
 Brethren, no love of Goods, no fear of Evil, And
 where there is no fear of the Society that is above

none will dispute our Title, When our Names are once enrolled among the honorable Companies of that Corporation, and among the Twelve *chief Tribes of the Children of that Israel*, we shall never lose our Privilege, nor have our Names blotted out: We shall always enjoy our just Rights and Liberties, and upon the continuance of our Charter, praise the Goodness of our Eternal King, and ever speak the sweet Language of the Place, *Hallelujah; Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power, unto the Lord our God.*

F I N I S.
